Lincoln's Body Guard

The Union Light Guard
of Ohio

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The Seventh Independent Company

of

Ohio Volunteer Cavalry

1863--1865

By

ROBERT W. MCBRIDE,

One Time 1st Corporal and also
Company Clerk.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

PREFATORY.

This booklet is not intended as a contribution to either literature or history. It is intended as a mere token of remembrance among comrades. As memory reaches back through the years, my heart turns to those comrades of mine who, in the midst of one of the most deadly conflicts the world has ever known, volunteered to go as soldiers on a special service, the nature of which none of them knew. They only knew that they were going in the service of their country, but they also knew that in that day wherever men followed the old flag, death trod on the heels of duty. It seems to me that at that stage of the war, men who volunteered for an unknown and special service were entitled to as much credit as if they had volunteered in a forlorn hope.

They went, expecting to face danger, and were disappointed when they were denied that chance. It has taken years to efface that disappointment and bring to them a tardy realization that their service was as honorable as if they had actually challenged death on the field of battle.

R. W. McB.

October 15, 1908.

G. C. ASHMUN, M. D.

Abraham Lincoln's Body Guard

The Union Light Guard, otherwise known as the Seventh Independent Company of Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, was organized by Governor David Tod, of Ohio, during the months of November and December, 1863, for special service, the nature of which was not disclosed to the members of the Company until some time after it was mustered into the service. The original intention was to select one man from each county in the State, and the military committees of the several counties were requested to each select a representative for their county, and furnish him transportation to Columbus. Some of the counties being slow in responding, other counties were allowed to furnish men to make up the deficiency. Their enlistment was for three years, or during the war, and they were mustered into the service at Columbus, O., December 17, 1863, by Capt. Elmer Otis, Fourth U. S. Cavalry, acting as mustering officer. They left Columbus for Washington, D. C., December 22, 1863, via Wheeling, W. Va., and the B. & O. R. R. On arrival at Washington they reported to the Secretary of War, and were first assigned to barracks located a few squares southwest of the War Department. The members of the company then learned for the first time that the special service for which they were enlisted was to act as a bodyguard or mounted escort for President Lincoln. Later, barracks were built for the company in what is now known as the "White Lot," then called the Treasury Park. The barracks were directly south of the Treasury Department and opposite E street. The stables in which the company horses were kept were on the north side of E street, adjacent to Fifteenth street, and occupied a part of the ground now occupied by the Albaugh Opera House. A part of the company was assigned to duty at the White House, while others were detailed to various points in and around Washington, a large number being sent to the Virginia side of the river, and scattered among the forts constituting the defenses of Washington, from a point opposite Georgetown to a point below Alexandria.

During the summer months President Lincoln spent his nights at the Soldiers' Home, near Washington, and the company escorted him from the White House to the Home and returning.

The company continued in the service after the assassina-

tion of President Lincoln until September 9, 1865, when it was mustered out at Washington, D. C., by H. C. Strong, First Lieutenant Vet. Res. Corps.

Taking the company as a whole, the membership was much above that of the average company of soldiers, intellectually, morally, socially and physically. The mystery concerning the special service for which the company was organized, and the care taken in their selection, spurred the imagination and led its members to hope and believe that they would be given a chance to write their names high on the nation's roll of honor. There was bitter disappointment when the men found themselves condemned to that which they felt was a service of "inglorious inactivity," and earnest efforts were made by members of the company and by others in their behalf to have the company assigned to duty at the front, where it could share in the activities and dangers of real warfare. These efforts elicited a stern reminder from the great War Secretary that a soldier's first duty was unquestioning obedience to the orders of his superiors, and an equally stern admonition to our Captain that it would go hard with him if the department was ever again annoyed by receiving further requests of that character. We were also reminded from other sources that as soldiers were needed for that particular duty, if we were sent to the front others must come from the front to take our places, and that we could serve our country as faithfully and as well by cheerfully discharging the duties assigned to us as we could possibly do on the field of battle. Aided by the perspective of time, we can now realize the truth of this as we then could not. We can also now realize as we could not at that time the honor of having been specially chosen as the personal escort and bodyguard of one of the greatest of Americans and greatest of men.

The company had its share of unpleasant experiences which were best forgotten, and when its members returned to their homes after being mustered out it is probable that a majority of them would have considered a blank page as the best record of their war service. Especially so, when they began to touch elbows with those who bore the scars of battle and listen to their tales of camp and campaign.

Now, however, we know that those same battle-scarred veterans would have been glad at any time to have changed places with us, and, instead of regarding service as the personal bodyguard of Abraham Lincoln as "inglorious," they esteem it to have been a service of high honor. One distinguished officer who had won honor in the field declared that he would rather have been the Captain of the Union Light Guard than a Brigadier General in any other service.

The following is a roster of the men as they were enlisted:
George A. Bennett, Columbus, O.
Arthur W. White, Columbus, O.
J. B. Jameson, Columbus, O.
Horace S. Fuller, Warren, O., clerk.
William P. Anderson, Marysville, O., editor.
Paul Metzger, Salem, O., student.
George C. Ashman, Talmage, O., teacher.
Josiah Chance, Perrysburgh, O., teacher.
David N. Jones, Delaware, O., farmer.
Samuel Culp, Waldo, O., farmer.
Webster M. Adams, Findlay, O., painter.
Ephraim Adamson, Cambridge, O., farmer.
Edward P. Brown, Lima, O., carpenter.
Frederick R. Baker, Avon, O., farmer.
Albert G. Bacon, Bucyrus, O., stone cutter.
Frank A. Baird, Zanesville, O., student.
Homer Barnes, Delaware, O., farmer.
Thomas B. Ball, Marysville, O., Shoemaker.
John I. Burnham, West Jefferson, O., farmer.
Henry C. Baird, Zanesville, O., miller.
Theodore F. Bailey, Delaware, O., farmer.
William P. Bogardus, Four Corners, O., farmer.
Abraham T. Brechbill, Defiance, O., clerk.
George G. Banks, Antwerp, O., farmer.
Lemuel A. Brandeberry, Delaware, O., dentist.
William I. Barbour, Marysville, O., clerk.
David Banker, Middletown, O., farmer.
Cornelius Curran, Logan, O.
Edward W. Crockett, Napoleon, O., farmer.
John Crowe, Defiance, O., merchant.
George W. Crum, Fremont, O., merchant.
Asa C. Cassidy, Zanesville, O., farmer.
John W. Custer, Lima, O., farmer.
Daniel H. Conditt, Newark, O., painter.
Henry G. Clark, Lockburn, O., farmer.
Hiram Cook, Circleville, O., carpenter.
Robert J. Cox, Delaware, O.
Henry Cutler, Harrisville, O., carriage maker.
Jeremiah N. Dunn, Mt. Gilead, O., teacher.
Edward P. Dolbear, Delaware, O., printer.
David J. Elliott, Sidney, O., farmer.
Thomas J. Everett, Millersburg, O., farmer.
Marshall D. Ellis, Eldorado, O., student.
Joseph Fulkerson, Bucyrus, O., bricklayer.
John F. Field, Columbus, O., farmer.
Gilbert N. Gilley, McConnellsville, O., carpenter.
Martin Gorman, Defiance, O., clerk.

William Gassoway, Smithfield, O., farmer.
Robert H. Hyde, Wauseon, O., clerk.
Frederick T. Hard, Norwalk, O., clerk.
Asa R. Hughes, Delaware, O., student.
Samuel P. Haverfield, Cadiz, O., dentist.
John Holmes, Bucyrus, O., farmer.
William P. Hopkins, Ravenna, O., clerk.
Lemuel T. Hibbard, Defiance, O., tinner.
William H. Hughes, Wilmington, O., farmer
Peter Ingle, Delaware, O., farmer.
Alfred Jordan, Springfield, O., farmer.
Jefferson Koontz, Canton, O., plasterer.
John F. Kellar, Caldwell, O., farmer.
Milton Koogle, Lebanon, O., carriage maker.
Joseph W. Lawrence, Marysville, O., printer.
George F. Laubender, Millersburg, O., farmer.
Samuel Lynn, Delaware, O., farmer.
Frank P. Lutz, Circleville, O., clerk.
John W. Minor, Eaton, O., farmer.
Ira L. Morris, Troy, O., farmer.
Robert W. McBride, Mansfield, O., clerk.
Andrew Mayfield, Norton, O., farmer.
James W. Mayfield, Delaware, O., farmer.
Thomas W. McClellan, Eaton, O., farmer.
Lewis M. Meeker, Canfield, O., hotel keeper.
George Orman, Lancaster, O., carpenter.
George H. Platt, Toledo, O., merchant.
Henry P. Pyle, Mt. Vernon, O., clerk.
Nathaniel M. T. Page, Portsmouth, O., clerk.
Thomas R. Plummer, Wauseon, O., merchant.
George S. Rowan, Chillicothe, O., cooper.
Samuel H. Rulon, Wilmington, O., dentist.
Mark B. Robinson, Miamisville, O., farmer.
John W. Ray, London, O., teacher.
Luther B. Ricketts, New Philadelphia, O., clerk.
James D. Raikes, Cambridge, O., engineer.
John C. Rhodes, Urbana, O., clerk.
John Q. A. Redd, Lebanon, O., baker.
Levi M. Rodecker, Woodsfield, O., artist.
Smith Stimmell, Lockburn, O., farmer.
David G. Spaulding, Delaware, O., carpenter.
Charles C. Smucker, Newark, O., tinner.
Judson A. Spaulding, Delaware, O., carpenter.
Benjamin F. Summers, London, O., artist.
William A. Scott, New Philadelphia, O., merchant.
Oscar H. Spencer, McArthur, O., watchmaker.
Emery C. Swank, Canfield, O., painter.
Barton W. Swerer, Brady Station, O., teacher.

Charles S. Slade, Wapakoneta, O., farmer.
Zebulon Sparks, New Philadelphia, O.
Imri Smalley, Jefferson, O., painter.
George Terry, Portsmouth, O., clerk.
Alva R. Tichenor, Lebanon, O., clerk.
Nelson Tway, Marysville, O., farmer.
Silas B. Thompson, New Concord, O., carpenter.
Wilson White, Newark, O., painter.
Joshua M. Yeo, Lebanon, O., clerk.
William Cook, Columbus, O., colored cook.
William Davis, Columbus, O., colored cook.
John Carter, Columbus, O., colored cook.
James Robinson, Columbus, O., colored cook.

The following named members of the company died while in the service:

Samuel Culp.
David A. Elliott.
Benjamin F. Summers.

The following named members were discharged before the end of their time of service:

Capt. George A. Bennett.
First Lieut. Arthur W. White.
Imri Smalley.
David N. Jones.
Henry C. Baird.
John Crowe.
Cornelius Curran.
Robert J. Cox.
John W. Custer.
Edward P. Dolbear.
George W. Donely.
John F. Field.
Frederick T. Hard.
Peter Ingle.
Milton Koogle.
Jefferson Koontz.
James W. Mayfield.
Paul Metzger.
John W. Minor.
John W. Ray.
Zebulon Sparks.
Judson A. Spaulding.
Oscar H. Spencer.
Wilson White.
John Carter.
William Cook.
William Davis.
James Robinson.

Second Lieut. James B. Jameson was promoted to First Lieutenant December 21, 1864.

George C. Ashmun was promoted to Second Lieutenant February 8, 1865.

The following named members of the company were commissioned in other commands:

Josiah Chance, promoted to Captain 127th Regiment U. S. Colored Troops, September 13, 1864.

William P. Bogardus, promoted to Second Lieutenant Twenty-fourth Regiment U. S. Colored Troops, March 6, 1865.

Jeremiah M. Dunn, promoted to Captain Twenty-ninth Regiment U. S. Colored Troops, September 26, 1864.

Marshall D. Ellis, promoted to Second Lieutenant U. S. Colored Troops, April 21, 1865.

Luther B. Ricketts, promoted to Second Lieutenant 102d Regiment U. S. Colored Troops, May 6, 1865.

Joshua M. Yeo, promoted to First Lieutenant and Adjutant 196th O. V. I., March 30, 1865.

With one exception the remaining members of the company were mustered out together, as a company, September 9, 1865. The one exception was Mark B. Robinson, who was on detached duty, and was not mustered out until November 24, 1865.

Efforts have been made from time to time since the war to hold reunions of the company, but without very great success. A number of the members got together twice at Columbus, O., and in 1898, during the National Encampment at Cincinnati, the following ten members met, viz.:

Martin Gorman, Defiance, O.
John C. Rhodes, Urbana, O.
Theodore F. Bailey, Delaware, O.
O. H. Spencer, Ironton, O.
Milton Koogle, Bellefontaine, O.
Nelson Tway, Kile, Madison county, Ohio.
Marshall D. Ellis, 843 Elm street, Indianapolis, Ind.
G. C. Ashmun, 794 Republic street, Cleveland, O.
David Banker, Jr., Poast Town, O.
Robert W. McBride, Indianapolis, Ind.

No attempt was made at that time to effect an organization. During the last summer (1908) the writer determined to make an effort to have a reunion of the company during the National Encampment at Toledo. As the result of much correspondence, responses were received from twenty-seven, of whom sixteen promised to attend. Seven of these failed to keep their promise, and only nine were at the appointed place, viz.:

G. C. Ashmun, 1965 East 101st street, Cleveland, O.
A. T. Brechbill, 122 Seneca street, Defiance, O.
G. G. Banks, Antwerp, O., R. F. D. No. 3.
George F. Laubender, Mt. Carmel, Ill.
M. B. Gorman, Defiance, O.
John Crowe, Defiance, O.
Smith Stimmel, Casselton, N. D.
Paul Metzger, Salem, O.
Robert W. McBride, Indianapolis, Ind.

Those who did attend had an enjoyable time and effected a permanent organization, with Lieut. G. C. Ashmun as President and Robert W. McBride as Secretary. It was decided that an effort should be made to locate the survivors, and that for the future we should try to keep in closer touch with each other. The writer also undertook to prepare, publish and distribute to the survivors a brief outline sketch of the company's organization, and of its service, with a copy of its original roster, and the addresses of the survivors, so far as they could be obtained. In doing this, something like two hundred letters have been written. As a result of this correspondence, thirty-nine survivors have been found and located as follows:

Arthur W. White, Bostwick, Neb.
Horace S. Fuller, Crete, Neb.
Wm. P. Anderson, 450 19th St., N. W., Washington, D. C., Treasury Department.
Paul Metzger, Salem, O.
George C. Ashmun, 1965 East 101st street, Cleveland, O.
Ephraim Adamson, Mowequa, Ill.
Edward P. Brown, Zebra, Mo.
John I. Burnham, San Jose, Cal.
Henry C. Baird, Zanesville, O.
Theodore F. Bailey, Delaware, O.
William P. Bogardus, Mt. Vernon, O.
Abraham T. Brechbill, 122 Seneca St., Defiance, O.
George G. Banks, Antwerp, O., R. F. D. No. 3.
John Crowe, Defiance, O.
Hiram Cook, Circleville, O.
Robert J. Cox, Delaware, O.
Marshall D. Ellis, 120 Mass. Ave., N. W., Washington, D. C.
Joseph Fulkerson, 55 Louder Ave., Columbus, O.
Martin Gorman, Defiance, O.
William H. Hughes, 41 W. McCreight St., Springfield, O.
John F. Kellar, Crookston, Neb.
Milton Koogle, Bellefontaine, O.

George F. Laubender, Mt. Carmel, Ill.
Samuel Lynn, Bentonville, Benton county, Ark.
Frank P. Lutz, 38 Block K, Pueblo, Colo.
Robert W. McBride, 1418 Park Ave., Indianapolis, Ind.
Andrew Mayfield, Norton, Delaware county, O.
James W. Mayfield, Norton, Delaware county, O.
George Orman, Lancaster, O.
Nathaniel M. T. Page, Cuba, Crawford county, Mo.
James D. Raikes, 901 Concannon St., Moberly, Mo.
John C. Rhodes, Urbanan, O.
Smith Stimmell, Casselton, N. D.
Charles C. Smucker, 675 Neil Ave., Columbus, O.
Oscar A. Spencer, Circleville, O.
Emery C. Swank, Soldiers' Home, Sandusky, O.
George Terry, Arbatross St., San Diego, Cal.
Nelson Tway, Kileville, O.
Joshua M. Yeo, Chillicothe, O.

Fifty-seven have been reported dead, viz.:

J. B. Jameson.
Josiah Chance.
Samuel Culp.
Webster M. Adams.
Frederick R. Baker.
Frank A. Baird.
Homer Barnes.
Thomas B. Ball.
Lemuel A. Brandeberry.
William I. Barbour.
David Banker.
Edward W. Crockett.
George W. Crum.
Asa C. Cassidy.
John W. Custer.
Henry G. Clark.
Daniel H. Conditt.
Jeremiah N. Dunn.
Edward P. Dolbear.
David A. Elliott.
Thomas J. Everett.
John F. Field.
Gilbert N. Gilley.
William Gassoway.
Robert H. Hyde.
Frederick T. Hard.
Asa R. Hughes.
Samuel P. Haverfield.
John W. Holmes.

William B. Hopkins.
Lemuel T. Hibbard.
Peter Ingle.
Jefferson Koontz.
Joseph W. Lawrence.
John W. Minor.
Ira L. Morris.
Lewis M. Meeker.
George H. Platt.
Henry P. Pyle.
Thomas R. Plummer.
George S. Rowan.
Samuel H. Rulon.
Mark B. Robinson.
Luther B. Ricketts.
John Q. A. Redd.
Levi M. Rodecker.
David D. Spaulding.
Judson A. Spaulding.
Benjamin F. Summers.
William A. Scott.
Barton W. Swerer.
Charles S. Slade.
Zebulon Sparks.
Imri Smalley.
Alva R. Tichenor.
Wilson White.

The following relatives of deceased members of the company have also been heard from:

Lieut. P. G. Banker, Middletown, O., son of David Banker.

Lieut. William E. Crockett, Napoleon, O., son of Edward W. Crockett.

D. Harry Conditt, 311 Market St., Camden, N. J., son of Daniel H. Conditt.

Mrs. Ada H. Gassoway, 1423 O St., N. E., Washington, D. C., widow of William Gassoway.

Mrs. A. W. Rodecker, Lancaster, O., widow of Levi M. Rodecker.

Mrs. Irene Scott, New Cumberland, O., widow of William A. Scott.

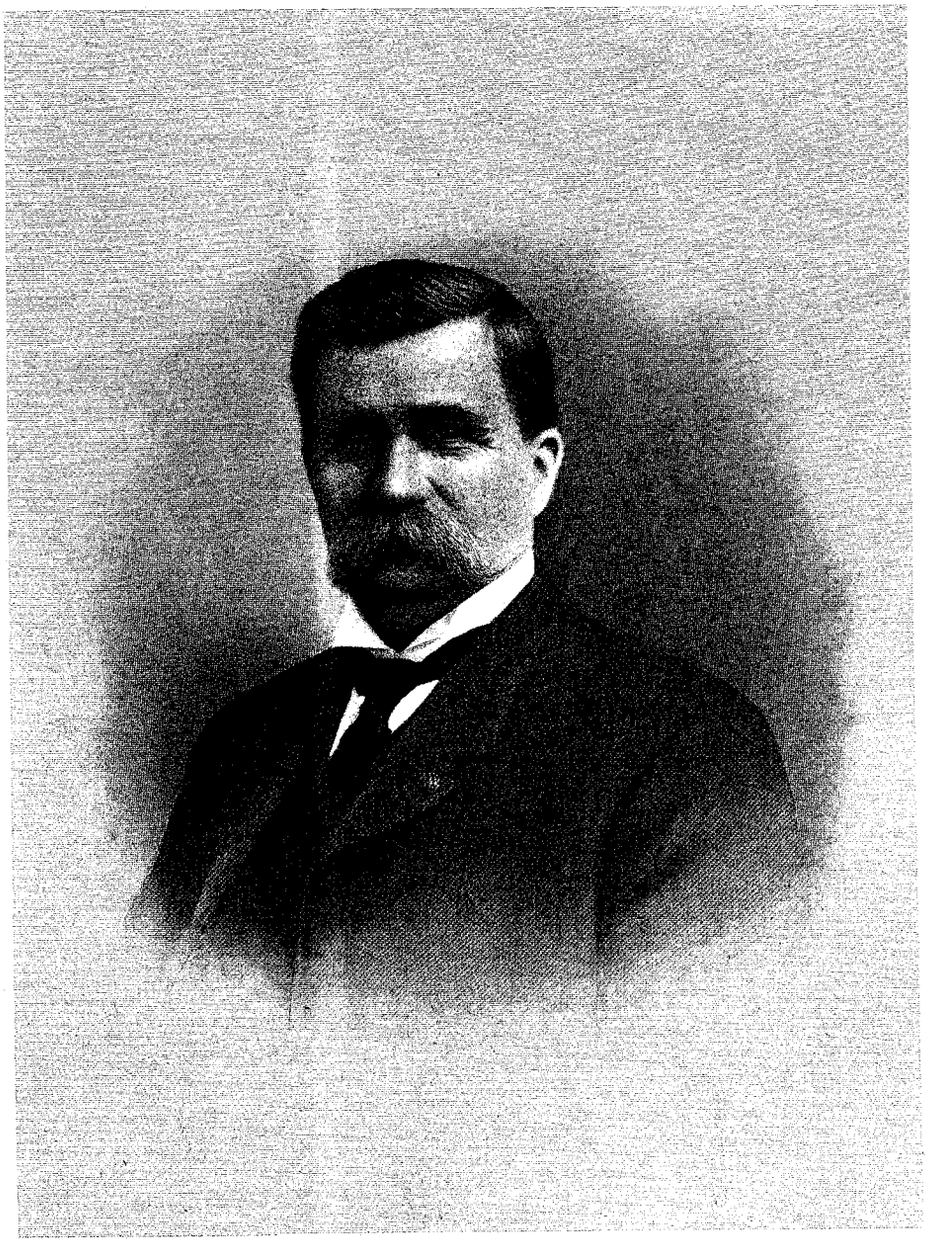
Of twelve members no trace has been found, viz.:

George A. Bennett.
David N. Jones.
Albert G. Bacon.
Cornelius Curran.
Henry Cutler.

Thomas W. McClellan.
John W. Ray.
Silas B. Thompson.

Also the four colored men who were enlisted as cooks.

ROBERT W. MCBRIDE.



Robert M. McBride

The following paper was written several years ago, at the request of some of the members of the Century Club, of Indianapolis. I append it in the hope that it may have a measure of interest for my surviving comrades:

SOME PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

By a Non-Commissioned Officer of His Body-guard.

It is a long step from the President of the United States to a Corporal of Cavalry, and yet when the President is Abraham Lincoln, and the Corporal happens to be a member of his body-guard, he may in the after years have memories of the President worth treasuring. He may not have seen much of the *President;* he may not have any memories of Cabinet meetings, of the preparation of state papers, or social or state functions, but he may have seen enough of the *man* to supply him with memories of many things that will bear telling.

To those familiar with the City of Washington during the time of the Civil War it was not surprising that Lincoln was assassinated. The surprising thing to them was that it was so long delayed. It is probable that the only man in Washington who, if he thought upon the subject at all, did not think that Mr. Lincoln was in constant and imminent danger, was Mr. Lincoln himself. The city was filled with Southern sympathizers, and could easily be entered by men coming from beyond the Rebel lines. The feeling against Mr. Lincoln as the chosen leader of those battling for the maintenance of the Union, was of course intensely bitter. Even in the North, he was constantly abused and villified, characterized as a tyrant and monster, while articles appeared daily in many of the newspapers, the tendency of which was to incite to his murder. It is said that it was with reluctance, and only upon the urgent solicitation of the great War Secretary, Edwin M. Stanton, and others, that he consented to have a guard stationed at the White House and a company of cavalry assigned as his mounted escort.

A company of infantry from one of Pennsylvania's famous regiments of "Bucktails" was camped in the grounds just south of the White House, and a daily detail from its ranks was posted in front of the House, one on each side of the great portico, the beats of the sentinels beginning on each side of the entrance and running east and west about

as far as the east and west sides of the main building. Posted thus, they were more ornamental than useful. They were not allowed to challenge or stop any person who sought to enter the White House, and its doors opened then as freely to visitors as they do to-day.

A company from a New York regiment of cavalry, known as "Scott's Nine Hundred," was his original cavalry escort, but in 1863 Governor David Tod, of Ohio, tendered the services of a picked company of cavalry from that State. His offer was accepted, and in December of 1863 the company, 108 men strong, reached Washington. The company was known as the "Union Light Guard," or "Seventh Independent Squadron of Ohio Volunteer Cavalry." From that time until it was mustered out of service, on the 9th day of September, 1865, it was the mounted escort or bodyguard of Abraham Lincoln and of his successor in office.

It was quartered in barracks in what is now known as the White Lot, but which was then known as the Treasury Park. In those days the White House grounds proper only extended south to a line running east and west from the south end of the Treasury Department Building to Seventeenth street. It was bounded on the south by a stone wall three or four feet in height, the top of the wall being on a level with the White House grounds. South of that, and extending to the old canal, which ran immediately north of the then unfinished Washington monument, was the Treasury Park, a great commons with a few small scattering trees and a half-mile race track. The barracks were south of the Treasury Department, on the west side of Fifteenth street, facing D and E streets. Their horses were stabled on the grounds now occupied by Albaugh's Opera House, and were picketed and groomed on Fifteenth street.

It was while serving as a member of this company that I had many opportunities to see Mr. Lincoln. The utter inadequacy of the measures taken for his protection will be understood in some measure when I describe how I first saw him.

It was after midnight of a January night in 1864. The approaches to the White House and the great portico on its front were lighted by flickering gas jets, for that was before the days of electric lighting. The two great iron gates which guarded the driveways from Pennsylvania avenue were open, but on each side of each gate was a mounted cavalryman, the detail from the Union Light Guard. Dismounted and lounging against the stone supports of the portico was the cavalry corporal of the guard, his horse being picketed in the rear of the house. (On that particular evening I happened to be the corporal of the guard.)

The two "Bucktails" were pacing their beats. From the end of the beat of the sentinel on the east side a walk ran to the Treasury Department, and just north of this path stood the White House stables, inside a square-trimmed hedge of boxwood, probably two and one-half or three feet high. From the end of the beat of the sentinel on the west side a path paved with brick ran westward to the old War Department, a dingy-looking old brick building of the dry goods box style of architecture, occupying a part of the north end of the ground now covered by the magnificent State Department Building. South of it, fronting on Seventeenth street, and separated from the War Department a short distance, was another old-time brick structure, resembling it in architectural ugliness, and occupied by the Navy Department. The space between the White House and War Department contained a number of great forest trees, making a beautiful little park in daylight; but at night, lighted only by the wavering beams of a solitary gas jet, it was a place of shadows and gloom. The path to the War Department ran along the south end of this little park, under the shadow of the trees. Just south of the path was a brick wall, probably five or six feet in height, easily scaled, enclosing what was then called the White House Gardens. Lights shone in only a few of the windows of the White House.

The front door opened, and a tall, rather slender, angular looking man came out alone. He wore a long black frock coat, and a silk hat of the peculiar narrow, high, straight style then in vogue. The hat had apparently either seen its best days or had been badly cared for, as it had lost its shine, and the nap was standing on end in many patches. The long coat and the high hat made him seem taller and more slender than he really was.

Closing the door, he clasped his hands behind his back, and with head bent forward, walked slowly toward the front of the portico. At this, the cavalry corporal became suddenly alert, came to attention, drew his sabre, and brought it to a carry; for, thanks to the illustrated papers (Harper's Weekly and Frank Leslie), he had recognized in the gaunt figure approaching the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Army, to whom all military courtesy was due.

The President came slowly forward until he reached the steps, and there stopped. For several minutes he stood, seemingly in deep thought, and apparently giving no heed to his surroundings. The opportunity to observe him closely was improved, for he had stopped where one of the gaslights shone full upon him. He looked careworn and

weary. His features, as well as his form, were rugged and angular, and there were lines in his face that do not appear in his portraits. His hat was set back far enough to show a high, broad forehead. His nose and ears were large, his cheek-bones prominent, his jaws square, his cheeks slightly sunken, his mouth large, and his lips full and rather prominent. His eyes were bent downward and could not be distinctly seen. His face, around his mouth and a portion of his cheeks, was smoothly shaven, but his chin and jaws were covered with closely trimmed dark colored whiskers.

He came down the steps, and without appearing to notice, gravely lifted his hat in recognition of the salute given, and turned toward the War Department. With similar gravity he acknowledged the salute of the infantryman as he passed him. While the infantryman at once resumed his beat, both he and the cavalryman anxiously watched the tall figure as it passed into the shadows of the great trees. and I know of one of them whose anxiety was only relieved when Mr. Lincoln was seen to enter the War Department Building. In about half an hour he came back, still alone. This, while the first, was only one of many similar occurrences; for, as I then learned, it was his frequent and almost nightly practice to thus visit the War Department, before going to bed, that he might have the latest news from the front. It was also his daily practice to make an early morning visit to the department. I never saw him attended at any of these times. He always went and came alone. I think, however, that late in the fall of 1864 a member of the police force in plain clothes attended him whenever he left the White House.

From the description I have given of the surroundings it can be seen how easy it would have been for an assassin to have killed him while he was on one of these solitary visits to the War Department, and how little actual protection was given him by the guards as they were posted. The evidence on the trial of the conspirators showed that they knew of his habit of visiting the War Department, and that they had at one time planned to abduct him, by seizing him on a dark night, while in the shadows of the park, lifting him over the brick wall that bordered the south side of the pathway. and hurrying him across the Treasury Park to a vacant house belonging to a rebel sympathizer, where he could be kept concealed in the cellar until he could be taken across the Potomac in a boat. The plan was practicable, and I have never understood why it was abandoned.

The next morning I witnessed an interesting scene. Mr. Lincoln came out and started toward the department, ap-

parently absorbed in thought. The infanry sentinel presented arms as he approached, but Mr. Lincoln walked by, without returning his salute. The soldier remained standing at a present arms. When Mr. Lincoln had passed him nearly or quite two rods, he suddenly stopped, turned clear around, lifted his hat and bowed. His manner was significant of his kindly nature. It was that of one gentleman apologizing to another for an unintentional slight. Mr. Lincoln was not a miliary man, yet his position made him the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, and entitled him to military honors. He understood that the duty of an officer to return a salute was as imperative as the duty of the soldier to give it. The humblest private in the ranks is entitled to have his salute returned, and a failure to return it is an affront and a breach of military courtesy. When Mr. Lincoln realized that he had failed to recognize the salute at the proper time, he was not content to merely return it, but in his manner of returning it, tendered an ample apology. I asked the soldier why he continued standing at a present after the President had passed him so far. He explained that such occurrences were common; when Mr. Lincoln was absorbed in thought, he frequently passed the sentry without returning the salute, but never failed to remember before he had gone very far, and invariably stopped, when he did remember, and returned it.

We soon learned to know from Mr. Lincoln's manner, as he returned from the War Department, whether the news from the front was good or otherwise. If good, he came back with head erect and arms swinging. His countenance was bright, and he usually smiled as he acknowledged the salute. If the news from the front was not encouraging, we could read it in his manner. His countenance was clouded, and he frequently walked with bowed head, and hands clasped behind his back.

One night there was an alarm of fire. The White House stables were burning. Those of us who were early on the ground saw a tall and hatless man come running from the direction of the White House. When he reached the boxwood hedge, that served as an enclosure to the stables, he sprang over it like a deer. As he approached the stable he inquired if the horses had been taken out. On learning that they had not, he asked impatiently why they had not, and with his own hands burst open the stable door. A glance within showed that the whole interior of the stable was in flames, and that the rescue of the horses was impossible. Notwithstanding this, he would apparently have rushed in, had not those standing around caught and restrained him. It suddenly occurred to someone that pos-

sibly the stables had been fired for the purpose of bringing him out of the White House, and giving an opportunity to assassinate him. Captain Bennett, of the Union Light Guard, and some others, immediately hurried him into the White House, while, by Captain Bennett's orders, with a detail of the men of our company, I took charge of the entrance, remaining there on duty for several hours.

After posting the sentinels, I went inside. Mr. Lincoln, with others, was standing in the East room, looking at the still burning stable. He was weeping. Little "Tad," his youngest son, explained his father's emotion. His son Willie had died a short time before. He was his father's favorite, and the stable contained a pony that had belonged to the dead boy. The thought of his dead child had come to his mind as soon as he learned the stables were on fire, and he had rushed out to try to save the pony from the flames.

The presidential receptions offered another opportunity for the assassin. The recent tragic death of President McKinley shows that it was indeed a real danger. With feeling running so high, it speaks well for the American character that some fanatic did not take advantage of the license afforded by the presidential receptions to assassinate him as President McKinely was assassinated. At those receptions Mr. Lincoln, like other Presidents, would stand for hours shaking the hands of all who came. For hours a constant stream of mixed humanity passed him. The clerk, the mechanic and the laborer from the streets would elbow the millionaire or the high official, as they crowded through, and the President greeted all with the same courtesy.

During a public reception at the White House, on an evening in March of 1864, while standing near the entrance, watching the crowds as they came, I noticed two officers come in quietly and join the throng passing around to the right to reach the President. One wore a close-cropped brownish colored beard and mustache, that covered his entire face. His uniform showed the slight purplish tinge taken on by the military uniform in those days, when it had seen much service in the field. His shoulder straps were those of a Major General. The other, who followed him closely, also wore a full beard, which, as I remember it, was darker than that of his companion, and was not trimmed. His shoulder straps were those of a Brigadier General. Someone asked: "Who are they?" Most of those present were familiar with the general officers of the Army of the Potomac, but these were strangers. Suddenly someone whispered: "That looks like the picture of Grant in Harper's Weekly," and then the word went round that

it was General Grant, with General Rawlings, his Chief of Staff. General Grant had just been nominated and confirmed as Lieutenant General, and had come East to receive his commission and take command of the armies. This was his first visit to the White House during the war, and his first meeting with Mr. Lincoln. I had the privilege of seeing them meet. Mr. Lincoln recognized General Grant before he reached him, and, contrary to his usual custom, stepped forward to greet him. He was much taller than General Grant, and when he clasped his hand, his head bent downward, as he looked into General Grant's eyes. I could not hear what they said. The crush became terrific, as the crowd tried to get near enough to witness the meeting. With other members of my company, I assisted in clearing the way for General Grant to escape from the crush. Placing him and Secretary of State William H. Seward in the center, we formed a sort of football wedge, and thus forced our way through the crowd and across the East room. On the east side of the East room was a sofa, on which Mr. Seward and General Grant climbed. A little speech from Mr. Seward and a little energetic pushing by the guard, started the throng past General Grant, who shook hands with them as they passed.

Mr. Lincoln spent the summer of 1864 at the Soldiers' Home, going out from the city in the evening and returning in the morning. A detachment of the guard accompanied him as his escort and remained at the Soldiers' Home over night. Occasionally Mr. Lincoln would go among the men and chat familiarly with them.

Mr. Lincoln's manner on such occasions was that of one having a genuine, kindly interest in the members of the company and a wish to learn how matters looked from their point of view. There was nothing patronizing about it, nor anything savoring of condescension or superciliousness. My first impression on seeing Mr. Lincoln was that he was ungainly, awkward and ugly. Memory recalls him as being rugged, strong, plain and kind.

One beautiful spring morning in 1864, as the President returned from his morning visit to the War Department, he found a group of school children playing on the north portico of the White House. The news from the front had evidently been satisfactory, and the President was bright and cheerful. He stopped, called the children around him, and for several minutes talked pleasantly with them, looked at their books, questioned them about their studies, and said pleasant, quaint and humorous things. His manner was not that of condescension, but rather that of comradeship.

The children crowded round him as if he had been their elder brother.

When Mr. Lincoln delivered his second inaugural address I had the privilege of standing within twenty feet of him. His voice was singularly clear and penetrating. It had a sort of metallic ring. His enunciation was perfect. There was an immense crowd of people surrounding the east front of the Capitol, but it seemed as if his voice would reach the entire audience. It had rained a great deal during the forenoon, and clouds overcast the sky, as the presidential party and Senate came out on the east portico. While the ceremonies were in progress the clouds suddenly parted, and, although it was about midday, Venus was seen clearly shining in the blue sky. The attention of the immense throng was directed to it. The superstitious ones, and some who were not so superstitious, as they listened to that wonderful address, were impressed with the thought that the appearance of the star might be an omen of the hoped for peace, of which Mr. Lincoln spoke with such wistful pathos.

General Lee surrendered to General Grant on the 9th day of April, 1865. The word reached the War Department and was given out on Monday, the 10th day of April. At that time I was on detached duty in the Adjutant General's office, our rooms being in the Thompson Building, on the west side of Seventeenth street, opposite the Corcoran Art Gallery. The day was warm and the windows were open. We heard a shout, followed immediately by cheering. We looked from the open window toward the War Department, and saw evidence of great excitement. A voice rang out: "Lee has surrendered!" I know of no language sufficient to describe the scene that followed. In every direction the shout could be heard: "Lee has surrendered." Men yelled, screamed, shouted, cheered, laughed and wept. No one thought of doing business. A crowd gathered in front of the War Department. A band appeared from somewhere and commenced playing patriotic airs. In response to calls, Secretary Stanton, Adjutant General Townsend, Vice President Andrew Johnson, Preston King, Montgomery Blair and others made speeches. That of Andrew Johnson was bitter and vindictive. One expression I can never forget. It was: "And what shall be done with the leaders of the rebel host? I know what I would do if I were President. I would arrest them as traitors, I would try them as traitors, and. by the Eternal, I would hang them as traitors." His manner and his language impressed me the more because of its contrast with the temperate manner and language of President Lincoln.

Someone in the crowd shouted: "To the White House!"

The crowd surged in that direction, and began calling for the President. He appeared at an upper window, just west of the portico. His appearance was the signal for cheering that continued for many minutes, with shouts of "Speech! Speech!" He raised his hand, and the crowd stilled.

He said: "My friends, you want a speech, but I cannot make one at this time. Undue importance might be given to what I should say. I must take time to think. If you will come here to-morrow evening I will have something to say to you. There is one thing I will do, however. You have a band with you. There is one piece of music I have always liked. Heretofore it has not seemed the proper thing to use it in the North; but now, by virtue of my prerogative as President and Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, I declare it contraband of war and our lawful prize. I ask the band to play 'Dixie.'" Again the crowd went wild, and for probably the first time the tune of "Dixie" was greeted with cheers from Union throats.

I do not recall any history of the time or any life of Lincoln that recounts this incident, yet I doubt not there are still living scores of men who were present and saw and heard it.

Some years ago Mr. H. H. Twombly, in an article published in the Washington Times, attempted to give an account of this incident. His report, however, is incorrect. It represents Mr. Lincoln as appearing at the main entrance of the White House when the crowd first gathered, stepping out to the front of the portico, and then and there making a speech. Mr. Twombly's account, so far as the speech is concerned, relates to the occurrences of the next evening, the 11th of April, and not to those of April 10th, when news of the surrender was first received. On the first occasion Mr. Lincoln did not come out of the house at all, but stood at the upper window. He made no speech. It was evident he was acting on the impulse of the moment when he called upon the band to play the Southern air. The act was significant and characteristic. It illustrated forcibly one of the differences between the character of Mr. Lincoln and that of Andrew Johnson. Mr. Johnson's first thought was of vengeance. Mr. Lincoln's first thought was evidently one of peace and reconciliation, and of how to best heal the wounds of war. Thenceforth the North and South were one, and his impulsive acceptance of the music of the South was a tender of the olive branch.

The next evening the President, according to his promise, made that which proved to be his last public speech. This speech, which is doubtless familiar to all, shows that even in that moment of victory Mr. Lincoln had in mind the

smarting wounds of both victor and vanquished, and was already grappling the problem of reconciliation. On Friday night of that week he was shot.

ROBERT W. MCBRIDE.

NOTE.—Since the foregoing was written my attention has been called to page 252 of Noah Brooks' "Washington in Lincoln's Time," where the "Dixie" incident is referred to. Also to a note in Mr. Brooks' "Lincoln Reminiscences," published in the old Scribner's Monthly in April, 1878. I have not had opportunity to examine either of these publications, but I am informed that Mr. Brooks' account agrees substantially with mine.

ADDENDUM.

Since this book went to press, I have received a letter from John W. Ray, who is living at Guthrie, Oklahoma. This accounts for forty living members of the Company.

I am also glad to be able to include an excellent halftone portrait of Lieutenant (now doctor) G. C. Ashum, of Cleveland, Ohio.